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ABSTRACT

This bibliography presents 17 annotated citations dealing with various aspects of advisory committees. The documents and journal articles, all from the ERIC system, offer guidelines for administrators who are organizing and working with advisory councils, comment on strengths and weaknesses of advisory committees, examine principal-advisory group interaction, and consider the roles of such groups in student involvement, citizen participation, community cooperation, and school-community relationships. (Author)

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The Best of ERIC

Clearinghouse on Educational Management

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Two major types of advisory committees are helpful—one to provide constant feedback, the other to study specific problems facing the community. Membership should include the "antis," since one key purpose is to find out what the community is thinking. The authors' research indicates that people who are negatively disposed toward the schools become favorably inclined after one year on an advisory committee.

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Educational institutions have always had input from the upper and middle classes: the drastic need today is for input from *all* groups. In this perceptive and practical article, the author focuses on how to obtain community involvement of minority groups.

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How to get involvement. The first step is a survey of the community, including militant as well as conservative elements, to identify community leaders who should be contacted by the head of the organization rather than by a subordinate. A patronizing attitude during the initial meeting is "the number one cardinal sin," and it is not advisable "to use parliamentary procedure in early meetings," but rather to work out procedures and rules of the group's own making.

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Citizens committees—failure or success? This question and a lot of other questions about advisory committees are asked and answered in this article. What to do and what not to do about policies, members, purposes, and activities are discussed.

A citizens committee is no substitute for the board of education, but as a partner it can share with the board, the school staff, and others in the development of policies the board will enact.

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Administrators and boards of education are realizing the benefits of citizens committees—advice and assistance and better use of time and resources. Learners, council members, parents, schools, and the community also gain. Every community evaluates its schools: the conclusions and judgments of an advisory council collecting and disseminating appropriate information can crystallize support for the schools and offset vague and unrealistic criticism.

Regardless of the size of the district, the authors suggest a central council of 9-12 people, supplemented by other committees of 5-9 members. A desirable objective is to involve 1 percent of the voters in committees that are school sponsored rather than independent, both temporary and continuing, and advisory not administrative. The selection process receives detailed treatment.

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In developing council operations, two concerns are important: internal workings such as bylaws, responsibilities, and policies; and the process of how members can become informed and can learn about problems to be studied.

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Information is primarily directed toward new members, listing types of councils, what councils can do to help administrators and teachers, roles of the chairman and of members, and various sample activities.

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Principals whose communities and councils are less supportive and even challenging appear more likely to use techniques of impression management than do principals whose communities and councils are supportive of the principal's authority to make final decisions.

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The results of evaluation survey questionnaires, sent to all principals and council chairmen, and to randomly selected council members, offer statistical data, analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and conclusions and recommendations.

In the opinion of all the respondents—principals, chairmen, staff, parents, community representatives, and students—the greatest strength of the advisory council is in the cooperation within the group; the greatest weakness, in community apathy.

Principals cited the following as strengths: community interest, democratic representation of membership, effective school-community communications, support of the existing PTA, and involvement in school problems. Principals expressed frustration over unskilled and untrained council chairmen, inexperienced members, poor attendance at meetings, and unavailability of funds.

The most recognizable need is for inservice training for all members, with special focus on the roles of the chairman and the principal, who represent equally important elements in the council success.

Lovetere, John P. "Student Involvement on School Committees." *NASSP Bulletin,* 57, 373 (May 1973), pp. 132-137. EJ 076 885.

A principal who believes that the answer to involving students in school operation lies in the principles of participatory democracy reports on the successful use of multilevel advisory committees in his junior high school.

Student involvement in a permanent advisory group means sharing in the decision-making process, but does not mean making all the decisions. The members concerned—boards of education, administrators, principals, faculties, and students—are responsive to good committee work, and through public deliberations their positions become less self-serving and more in harmony with the general good. The principal may lose some power as a result of student involvement, but his influence will be enhanced.

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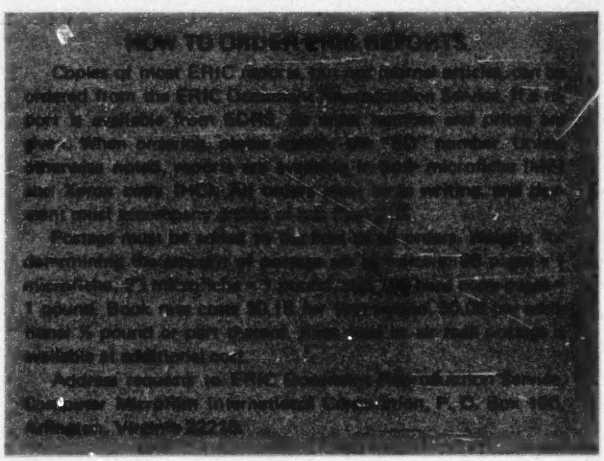


(Available from National School Boards Association, State National Bank Plaza, Evanston, Illinois 60201. Kit No. 72-55, $2.00.)

A kit assembled to help school boards develop policies about advisory groups includes a few pages of background discussion and policy samples and resources reproduced from the files of the NSBA Policy Information Clearinghouse.

The discussion is brief, but it clearly points up some reasons why one committee will succeed and another will fail, and the differences between the fake and the valid. Boards are cautioned not to expect citizen committees to put out educational fires or to bring peace in the midst of controversy; instead, boards should encourage the committees to help the board sense the coming of changes and anticipate crises.

Committees who are given a clear objective and helped to develop rules for operating will most likely succeed. Four aspects of committee life, however, are subject to board wishes: how the committee is to be appointed, the selection of members, the length of the committee's life, and the handling of operational matters.

Policy samples from a dozen schools provide working papers that can be adapted to meet local requirements.

Oldham, Neild B. *Citizens Advisory Committees: Public Participation Increases; Guides Change in American Education. Current Trends in School Policies and Programs.* Arlington, Virginia: National School Public Relations Association, 1973. 56 pages. ED 091 853 MF $0.75 HC $3.15. (Also available from National School Public Relations Association, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209. Stock No. 411-13307. $6.75.)

Information from a survey conducted by *Education U.S.A.* summarizes current trends, policies, and practices of citizens councils.

Survey responses reveal that the citizens advisory committee movement has taken off in unexpected directions. Originally intended as a group serving the entire district and its board of education as a consultative body, the citizens committee is now appearing frequently at the school building level as an operational unit.

At the district level, the advisory committee makes its best contribution when it is created for a major policy purpose and utilized for consultation. At the school building level, the committee "rolls up its sleeves and goes to work," performing rather than advising.

Citizen participation raises questions: How to set up committees, select members, choose tasks, get the most value from efforts, and determine the characteristic most valuable to a school system? Some answers and ideas to try and to test are offered in the survey analysis and in the illustrations from various communities and districts.

"Rebuilding a School: Four Views on Community Participation." *CEFP Journal*, 11, 3 (May-June 1973), pp. 8-11. EJ 078 813.

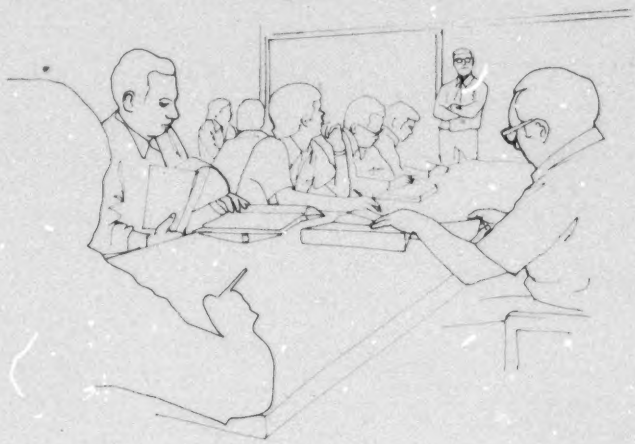
The director of the School Building Planning Division, the chairman of the Community Advisory Planning Committee, and two commissioned architects express their views that the use of an advisory group in planning the rebuilding of a Los Angeles high school produced a better school.

In the viewpoint of one partner on the team, there is no better way to plan a good school than community involvement. Although the architect may give more of his time initially, listening to what the community really wants, in the long run time was saved.

Stavdal, Bill. "Getting People Input into a School System." *School Progress*, 41, 9 (September 1972), p. 37. EJ 063 882.

Based on the experiences of a Canadian school district, this report offers advice on how to know what the public wants and how it feels about existing offerings, without undercutting the professional educators. In forming a system of ad hoc advisory groups, the district believes that it has "hit upon a worthwhile, but not perfect, vehicle of community opinion."

Groups can be initiated by the board of education or by the community and should be open to any public school student or any citizen with an opinion to put forward. Short-lived advisory groups, each focusing on a specific issue, are found to be most effective in attracting interested people.



Sumption, Merle R., and Engstrom, Yvonne. *School-Community Relations: A New Approach.* Administration in Education Series. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1966. ED 015 524 Document not available from EDRS. (Available from McGraw-Hill Book Company, 8171 Redwood Highway, Novato, California 94947. $8.95.)

Citizens school advisory committees are called by many names—councils, commissions, study groups, consulting committees, parents advisory councils, or advisory councils. Whether local, state, or national, such organizations may be classified as independent or school-sponsored, temporary or continuing, overall committees or phase committees.

Writing in the belief that "citizen participation in the school program on a sound, organized basis can and should be the keystone principle of school-community relations," these authors recommend such participation by way of the school-sponsored, continuing, overall advisory committee. Their chapter contains detailed information on the selection and organization of committees, guidelines for effective operation, utilization of professional consultants, areas of study to be undertaken, and dangers and difficulties to be avoided.

University of California at Riverside. *A Master Plan Citizens Committee for the Oakland Public Schools.* Riverside: Western Regional School Desegregation Projects, 1971. 16 pages. ED 065 650 MF $0.75 HC $1.50.

A multiple option approach for deepening parent and community participation in the Oakland Public Schools "recognizes that there is no single best way to involve parents and community in the vital issues at a given school." Rather, "depending on local needs, tradition and circumstances, each school community is free to design and propose its plan for the most effective organization." Options include strengthening existing groups, creating a school advisory council, or electing a school site advisory board.

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The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system operated by the National Institute of Education. ERIC serves educators by disseminating research results and other resource information that can be used in developing more effective educational programs. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, one of several such units in the system, was established at the University of Oregon in 1966. The Clearinghouse and its companion units process research reports and journal articles for announcement in ERIC's index and abstract bulletins.

Research reports are announced in Resources in Education (RIE), available in many libraries and by subscription for $42.70 a year from the United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Journal articles are announced in Current Index to Journals in Education. CIJE is also available in many libraries and can be ordered for $50 a year from CCM Information Corporation, 866 Third Avenue, Room 1126, New York, New York 10022.

Besides processing documents and journal articles, the Clearinghouse prepares bibliographies, literature reviews, monographs, and other interpretive research studies on topics in its educational area.

This publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the Association of California School Administrators for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinions, however, do not necessarily represent the official view or opinions of either the Association of California School Administrators or the National Institute of Education.

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This proposal for a Master Plan Citizens Committee (MPCC), to be operational from April 1971 through June 1972, outlines objectives and functions. Guidelines are provided for organization of and participation on school site committees formed under the multiple option program. The principal is responsible for seeing that a cross-section of all parents and community concerned are involved in discussing the alternatives and coming to a decision on the plan.

Membership and responsibilities of the MPCC are discussed, including description of the task forces to be established on curriculum and instruction, school buildings, community resources, decentralization, school finances, and any other areas the committee feels should be investigated. It is suggested that the school site committees develop mini-master plans in relation to these task force areas.

Zelman, Susan, and Grainer, Marc. "An Evaluation of Citizen Participation in an Urban School." Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, Chicago, April 1974. 39 pages. ED 091 806 MF $0.75 HC $1.85.

Although this study considers the concept of citizen participation only as it relates to the improvement of educational services to the urban culturally deprived, the findings are interesting to all administrators.

The operations of a citizen committee associated with two neighborhood schools in the Boston area were studied to evaluate the effectiveness of the committee in achieving certain outcomes.

Political outcomes (defined as increase or decrease in citizen political power): The committee was unable to generate any citizen influence over school policy in areas of finance, curriculum, and personnel.

Socio-psychological outcomes (citizen feelings of control and identification with school policy-making processes): Although citizen participation seems to increase citizen feelings of control over decision-making, in fact these committees have no influence. This false sense of participation is dysfunctional to both citizens and administrators in that people who think they are being represented may not make any further efforts, or they may become frustrated if their input is ignored.

Programmatic outcomes (parent knowledge of school affairs and interest in children's work): A positive relationship is shown between participation and knowledge of school affairs. This outcome is important as a prerequisite for parent and administration promotion of educational change. However, analysis shows no relationship between participation and interest in children's school work, a finding that questions the usefulness of the participation policy to increase academic success of culturally deprived children by means of increased parental involvement.

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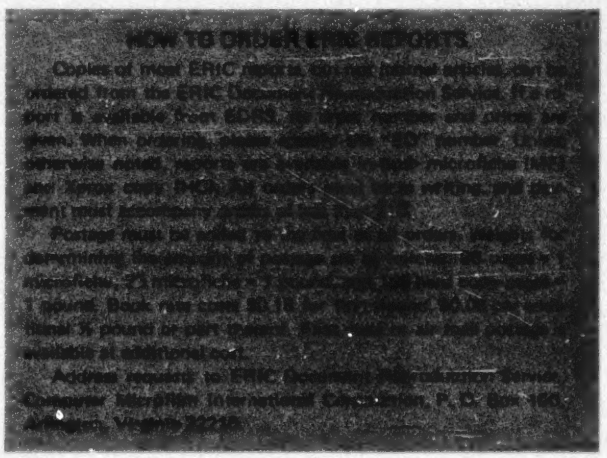


(Available from National School Boards Association, State National Bank Plaza, Evanston, Illinois 60201. Kit No. 72-55, $2.00.)

A kit assembled to help school boards develop policies about advisory groups includes a few pages of background discussion and policy samples and resources reproduced from the files of the NSBA Policy Information Clearinghouse.

The discussion is brief, but it clearly points up some reasons why one committee will succeed and another will fail, and the differences between the fake and the valid. Boards are cautioned not to expect citizens committees to put out educational fires or to bring peace in the midst of controversy; instead, boards should encourage the committees to help the board sense the coming of changes and anticipate crises.

Committees who are given a clear objective and helped to develop rules for operating will most likely succeed. Four aspects of committee life, however, are subject to board wishes: how the committee is to be appointed, the selection of members, the length of the committee's life, and the handling of operational matters.

Policy samples from a dozen schools provide working papers that can be adapted to meet local requirements.

Oldham, Neild B. *Citizens Advisory Committees: Public Participation Increases; Guides Change in American Education. Current Trends in School Policies and Programs.* Arlington, Virginia: National School Public Relations Association, 1973. 56 pages. ED 091 853 MF $0.75 HC $3.15. (Also available from National School Public Relations Association, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209. Stock No. 411-13307. $6.75.)

Information from a survey conducted by *Education U.S.A.* summarizes current trends, policies, and practices of citizens councils.

Survey responses reveal that the citizens advisory committee movement has taken off in unexpected directions. Originally intended as a group serving the entire district and its board of education as a consultative body, the citizens committee is now appearing frequently at the school building level as an operational unit.

At the district level, the advisory committee makes its best contribution when it is created for a major policy purpose and utilized for consultation. At the school building level, the committee "rolls up its sleeves and goes to work," performing rather than advising.

Citizen participation raises questions: How to set up committees, select members, choose tasks, get the most value from efforts, and determine the characteristic most valuable to a school system? Some answers and ideas to try and to test are offered in the survey analysis and in the illustrations from various communities and districts.

"Rebuilding a School: Four Views on Community Participation." *CEFP Journal,* 11, 3 (May-June 1973), pp. 8-11. EJ 078 813.

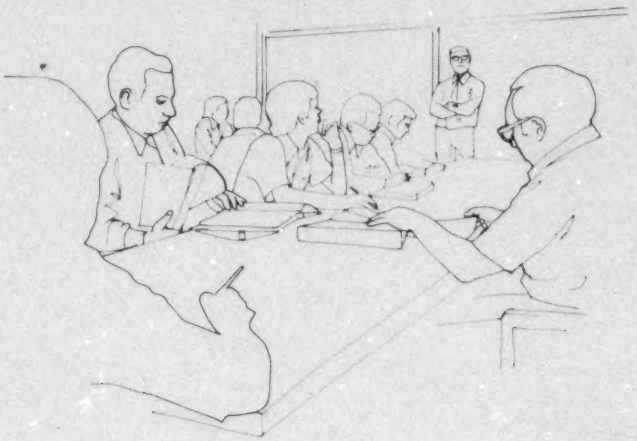
The director of the School Building Planning Division, the chairman of the Community Advisory Planning Committee, and two commissioned architects express their views that the use of an advisory group in planning the rebuilding of a Los Angeles high school produced a better school.

In the viewpoint of one partner on the team, there is no better way to plan a good school than community involvement. Although the architect may give more of his time initially, listening to what the community really wants, in the long run time was saved.

Stavdal, Bill. "Getting People Input into a School System." *School Progress,* 41, 9 (September 1972), p. 37. EJ 063 882.

Based on the experiences of a Canadian school district, this report offers advice on how to know what the public wants and how it feels about existing offerings, without undercutting the professional educators. In forming a system of ad hoc advisory groups, the district believes that it has "hit upon a worthwhile, but not perfect, vehicle of community opinion."

Groups can be initiated by the board of education or by the community and should be open to any public school student or any citizen with an opinion to put forward. Short-lived advisory groups, each focusing on a specific issue, are found to be most effective in attracting interested people.



Sumption, Merle R., and Engstrom, Yvonne. *School-Community Relations: A New Approach.* Administration in Education Series. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1966. ED 015 524 Document not available from EDRS. (Available from McGraw-Hill Book Company, 8171 Redwood Highway, Novato, California 94947. $8.95.)

Citizens school advisory committees are called by many names—councils, commissions, study groups, consulting committees, parents advisory councils, or advisory councils. Whether local, state, or national, such organizations may be classified as independent or school-sponsored, temporary or continuing, overall committees or phase committees.

Writing in the belief that "citizen participation in the school program on a sound, organized basis can and should be the keystone principle of school-community relations," these authors recommend such participation by way of the school-sponsored, continuing, overall advisory committee. Their chapter contains detailed information on the selection and organization of committees, guidelines for effective operation, utilization of professional consultants, areas of study to be undertaken, and dangers and difficulties to be avoided.

University of California at Riverside. *A Master Plan Citizens Committee for the Oakland Public Schools.* Riverside: Western Regional School Desegregation Projects, 1971. 16 pages. ED 065 650 MF $0.75 HC $1.50.

A multiple option approach for deepening parent and community participation in the Oakland Public Schools "recognizes that there is no single best way to involve parents and community in the vital issues at a given school." Rather, "depending on local needs, tradition and circumstances, each school community is free to design and propose its plan for the most effective organization." Options include strengthening existing groups, creating a school advisory council, or electing a school site advisory board.

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The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system operated by the National Institute of Education. ERIC serves educators by disseminating research results and other resource information that can be used in developing more effective educational programs. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, one of several such units in the system, was established at the University of Oregon in 1966. The Clearinghouse and its companion units process research reports and journal articles for announcement in ERIC's index and abstract bulletins.

Research reports are announced in Resources in Education (RIE), available in many libraries and by subscription for $42.70 a year from the United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Journal articles are announced in Current Index to Journals in Education. CIJE is also available in many libraries and can be ordered for $50 a year from CCM Information Corporation, 866 Third Avenue, Room 1126, New York, New York 10022.

Besides processing documents and journal articles, the Clearinghouse prepares bibliographies, literature reviews, monographs, and other interpretive research studies on topics in its educational area.

This publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the Association of California School Administrators for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinions, however, do not necessarily represent the official view or opinions of either the Association of California School Administrators or the National Institute of Education.

EA 006 464

This proposal for a Master Plan Citizens Committee (MPCC), to be operational from April 1971 through June 1972, outlines objectives and functions. Guidelines are provided for organization of and participation on school site committees formed under the multiple option program. The principal is responsible for seeing that a cross-section of all parents and community concerned are involved in discussing the alternatives and coming to a decision on the plan.

Membership and responsibilities of the MPCC are discussed, including description of the task forces to be established on curriculum and instruction, school buildings, community resources, decentralization, school finances, and any other areas the committee feels should be investigated. It is suggested that the school site committees develop mini-master plans in relation to these task force areas.

Zelman, Susan, and Grainer, Marc. "An Evaluation of Citizen Participation in an Urban School." Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, Chicago, April 1974. 39 pages. ED 091 806 MF $0.75 HC $1.85.

Although this study considers the concept of citizen participation only as it relates to the improvement of educational services to the urban culturally deprived, the findings are interesting to all administrators.

The operations of a citizen committee associated with two neighborhood schools in the Boston area were studied to evaluate the effectiveness of the committee in achieving certain outcomes.

Political outcomes (defined as increase or decrease in citizen political power): The committee was unable to generate any citizen influence over school policy in areas of finance, curriculum, and personnel.

Socio-psychological outcomes (citizen feelings of control and identification with school policy-making processes): Although citizen participation seems to increase citizen feelings of control over decision-making, in fact these committees have no influence. This false sense of participation is dysfunctional to both citizens and administrators in that people who think they are being represented may not make any further efforts, or they may become frustrated if their input is ignored.

Programmatic outcomes (parent knowledge of school affairs and interest in children's work): A positive relationship is shown between participation and knowledge of school affairs. This outcome is important as a prerequisite for parent and administration promotion of educational change. However, analysis shows no relationship between participation and interest in children's school work, a finding that questions the usefulness of the participation policy to increase academic success of culturally deprived children by means of increased parental involvement.

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